

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 032359

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PDIP, PFOR, NI, PSDC

SUBJECT: LETTER FROM GARBA TO SECRETARY VANCE

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER DATED JANUARY 28 FROM
MEA COMMISSIONER GARBA TO SECRETARY VANCE WHICH AMBASSADOR
SANU DELIVERED TO THE SECRETARY DURING THEIR MEETING
FEBRUARY 10, 6:30 P.M. TEXT IS AS FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE DEAR MR. SECRETARY OF STATE,

I WOULD WISH, FIRST OF ALL, TO CONGRATULATE YOU MOST
WARMLY ON YOUR ASSUMPTION OF OFFICE AS THE NEW UNITED
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STATES SECRETARY OF STATE. THE DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
OF YOUR EXALTED OFFICE ARE INDEED ONEROUS BUT I AM CON-
FIDENT THAT YOU WILL BEAR THE BURDENS OF YOUR OFFICE
SUCCESSFULLY.

3. YOU ARE, NO DOUBT, FULLY AWARE OF AFRICA'S YEARNINGS
AND ASPIRATIONS FOR REAL INDEPENDENCE AS WELL AS FOR A

MORE JUST ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ORDER. NIGERIA SHARES AFRICA'S HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS. NEVERTHELESS, THIS GENUINE DESIRE TO SEEK A MORE JUST AND HUMANE WORLD HAS, UNFORTUNATELY, NOT ALWAYS COINCIDED WITH THE POLICIES OF THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT IN RECENT TIMES. THIS HAS REGRETTABLY LED TO FREQUENT FRICTIONS, AVOIDABLE MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND SOMETIMES PAINFUL DIVERGENCIES OF OPINION, IN SPITE OF THE FACT THAT WE BOTH SHARE COMMON EXPERIENCES OF A COLONIAL PAST AS WELL AS THE COMMON IDEALS OF FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND HUMAN DIGNITY.

4. NIGERIA IS UNDERSTANDABLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA. WE HAVE, IN THE PAST, EXCHANGED VIEWS WITH VARIOUS OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND I PERSONALLY HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH YOUR PREDECESSOR IN OFFICE IN THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEMS OF ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA. OUR VIEWS ON BOTH PROBLEMS HAVE BEEN CLEARLY SPELT OUT TO THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT. OUR COMMITMENT TO INDEPENDENCE AND MAJORITY RULE IN ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA AS WELL AS OUR DEDICATION TO THE CHERISHED IDEALS OF FREEDOM, SELF-DETERMINATION, EQUAL RIGHTS AND DEVELOPMENT IS A COMMITMENT WHICH WE KNOW IS EQUALLY SHARED BY THE UNITED STATES. WE ARE GREATLY ENCOURAGED THAT THE NEW UNITED STATES ADMINISTRATION HAS REDEDICATED ITSELF TO THESE IDEALS WHICH HAVE BEEN THE FOUNDATION STONES OF YOUR GREAT NATION.

5. WE IN NIGERIA HAVE ALWAYS BELIEVED THAT THE PROBLEM OF

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NAMIBIA IS EASIER OF SOLUTION THAN THE SLIGHTLY MORE COMPLEX ZIMBABWE SITUATION. SWAPO, THE AUTHENTIC REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NAMIBIAN PEOPLE, IS A MOVEMENT WHICH ENJOYS THE RECOGNITION, NOT ONLY OF O.A.U., BUT ALSO OF THE UNITED NATIONS ORGANISATION. EVERYONE, EXCEPT PERHAPS THE SOUTH AFRICANS, AGREES THAT NAMIBIA IS BEING ILLEGALLY OCCUPIED BY THE APARTHEID REGIME OF SOUTH AFRICA IN SPITE OF VARIOUS UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTIONS CALLING FOR SOUTH AFRICA'S WITHDRAWAL. I AM THEREFORE HOPEFUL THAT THE ENORMOUS INFLUENCE OF THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE EFFECTIVELY BROUGHT TO BEAR ON THE SOUTH AFRICAN REGIME WITH REGARD TO NAMIBIA.

6. AS FAR AS THE PROBLEM OF ZIMBABWE IS CONCERNED, NIGERIA EXPRESSED HER RESERVATIONS ABOUT WHAT WERE FIRST REFERRED TO AS THE "KISSINGER PROPOSALS" AND LATER CALLED THE ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS. THESE INITIAL RESERVATIONS HAVE BEEN BORNE OUT BY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS LEADING TO THE FINAL REJECTION OF THE PROPOSALS BY THE REBEL LEADER, MR. IAN SMITH WHOM WE HAD WARNED WOULD ALWAYS IGNORE INTER-

NATIONAL OPINION AND THE UNMISTAKEABLE DESIRE OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE FOR FREEDOM. WE ALSO EXPRESSED RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE WISDOM OF ALLOWING MR. SMITH TO CONTINUE TO PLAY A DOMINANT ROLE IN THE NEGOTIATIONS. YOU ARE ALSO PROBABLY AWARE THAT NIGERIA, TOGETHER WITH THE FIVE FRONT-LINE STATES, HAVE DECLARED SUPPORT FOR THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. THIS OF COURSE DOES NOT MEAN THAT WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE THE

EXISTENCE AND INDEED THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER GROUPS IN ZIMBABWE BUT BECAUSE WE HOPE THAT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION COULD BE FACILITATED BY THIS PROCESS.

7. MR. SMITH'S LATEST REJECTION OF THE BRITISH PROPOSALS GIVES A NEW URGENCY TO THE SITUATION. NIGERIA HOPES THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD APPLY THE NECESSARY PRESSURE TO BRING MR. SMITH BACK TO THE CONFERENCE TABLE OTHERWISE, THE ALTERNATIVE WILL BE AN INTENSIFICATION OF THE ARMED
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STRUGGLE WITH ALL ITS DIRE CONSEQUENCES. IT IS THEREFORE MY SINCERE HOPE THAT IN THE INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION, NIGERIA AND THE UNITED STATES WILL FIND IT NECESSARY TO CONSULT ON A MORE REGULAR BASIS THAN HITHERTO IN ORDER TO AVOID A REPETITION OF PREVIOUS MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND RECRIMINATIONS. THE RECENT MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER TO LT.-GENERAL OLUSEGUN OBASANJO IS AN ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENT.

8. FINALLY, MR. SECRETARY OF STATE, NIGERIA'S RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A MATTER OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO US. YOU ARE NO DOUBT AWARE THAT ALTHOUGH WE HAVE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES IN THE PAST, WE HAVE ALWAYS CONTINUED TO WORK TOGETHER NOT ONLY ON MATTERS OF BILATERAL INTEREST TO OUR TWO COUNTRIES BUT ALSO ON OTHER MATTERS OF MUTUAL CONCERN TO OUR TWO PEOPLES. IT IS MY FERVENT HOPE AND DESIRE THAT WE WILL BOTH CONTINUE TO WORK TOGETHER TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE RELATIONS BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES TO THE MUTUAL BENEFIT OF OUR TWO PEOPLES.

9. PLEASE ACCEPT, MR. SECRETARY OF STATE, THE ASSURANCES OF MY HIGHEST CONSIDERATION AND ESTEEM. YOURS SINCERELY,
(BRIGADIER J. N. GARBA), COMMISSIONER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS. UNQUOTE.

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